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THE FAR EASTERN DIPLOMACY AND AMERICA

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Japan is now (March 10) in the midst of secret movements of cabinet-makers and party politicians who are trying to form a coalition government, as a necessary step toward a national decision of the momentous question whether or not she shall intervene on behalf of Asiatic Russia. In the meanwhile, in China, her troops have been efficiently guarding her interests along the Russian part of the Manchurian Railway; but Japan has yet to make up her mind as to the part she will play in the Siberian question, for she must be consulted or asked to participate if she decides to dispatch her forces through a Chinese territory to a former Chinese dependency. Both countries, at the same time, are engaged in an internal conflict; in one, to oust a military and bureaucratic ministry, and, in the other, to restore real power to anti-Republican leaders and establish national solidarity on a reactionary basis. America and China have had more or less influence in bringing about this state of things in Japan, and the same can be said of the Japanese and American influence over China. And the root of all these political and diplomatic interactions is of course the European War.

It may be well to outline Japan's war-time diplomacy from the very beginning. Public opinion, or rather official counsels, were divided at the time of Japan's declaration of war against Germany in China. Japan's policy since then, in consequence, has been nothing but a long series of miscalculations, contradictions and therefore blunders, as has been the policy of our European friends and foes. A section of us Japanese, especially those military and other men who have been trained in the German school of thought, were sincerely afraid of making an enemy of the Teuton

who, they argued, ought to side with the Russian and the Japanese in order to break up the economic empire of England, France and America, which has stood in the way of the plan of Asia for the Asiatics under Japan's leadership. Without guiding public sentiment to full appreciation of the international and moral character of the common cause, the people were induced to approve the Tsingtao campaign with a light heart and in anticipation of inheriting all German rights and interests in China at a small cost to themselves. As however war was declared on the ground of fulfilling the obligations of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, England rightly claimed that a contingent of her sons should take part in the capture of the German lease in the Far East. This participation had the immediate effect of bringing upon England some of the Chinese hatred incurred by Japan, but it also laid the foundation for the claim that some of the German rights should be taken into British custody. Both America and England, moreover, had obvious objection to a sudden accretion of power to Japan while other powers interested in Asian affairs were engrossed in war; so the Press in these countries clamoured for a delimitation of the sphere of the warlike activities of Japan, though she was later invited to extend her operations to other waters than the Chinese. On the part of the Foreign Office at Tokyo, on the other hand, the bitter experiences of diplomatic disappointments after the wars with China and Russia made it try the new plan of backing its claims at the peace congress after the war with agreements made during the war between Japan and China and Japan and Russia. The notorious twenty-one demands presented to China were severely attacked in China, America and Europe as an attempt to infringe the sovereign rights of an independent State, while the Foreign Minister of Japan was denounced at home largely on account of political jealousies. Anyhow the negotiations at Peking ended in what we may call "another diplomatic defeat after a successful campaign," probably to the ultimate good of both peoples concerned. The story of how the secret convention between the Tokyo and Petrograd governments came to be made public by the

Bolsheviki was also a salutary lesson to a nation of narrow-visioned patriots who had been taught to blindly trust in the superior wisdom of diplomatic and military authorities.

Korea in the Sino-Japanese War and China in the Russo-Japanese War had been made Japan's allies for strategic purposes, but in the Germano-Japanese campaign China was only a neutral. Japan did not like the idea of having China in the peace congress on a footing of equality with the captor of Tsingtao, but the Entente Powers would rather welcome the Asian Republic to their side so as to maintain a balance of power in the Far East. Partly because German influence was still virulent in China, the British Minister at Peking, it was rumored, secretly approved Yuan's assumption of Imperial title and in return sought China's participation in the general war. As the Tokyo Government was then opposed to Yuan's monarchism and in favour of the Republican leaders, this alleged movement in the Chinese capital was greatly resented by the Japanese Press as a breach of faith on the part of the British Ally, while the Germano-philés and Germano-phobes alike among the Japanese freely denounced their Government for having opened fire without waiting till England was so exhausted that she would beg Japan's aid on any terms. After this the unenviable work of checking Japan's domination over China devolved upon the then neutral United States, which, with no practical stake in the whole game, could better afford to take an idealistic stand. A new Cabinet at Tokyo, headed by a military bureaucrat, with no party basis in Parliament, declared a policy of strict neutrality in China's internal affairs, but the whole world including the Japanese could not help noticing that the military leaders began to get the upper hand over the Republican Opposition. America next broke diplomatic relations with Germany and successfully persuaded China to do likewise, which alarmed the Japanese Government for its prestige in the Far East and made it change its policy; it tried to induce China to declare war against Germany, and made an offer of some material benefits. This advice, if followed by the Peking authorities would greatly strengthen the North against the South, at least so

argued South China and the German sympathizers; and the Republican Opposition threatened a civil war. The American minister at Peking, therefore, tendered the friendly advice that national unity was more urgent for China than external war. This again enraged a section of the Japanese public as slapping the self-styled leader of the Far East in the face, but the Opposition Japanese majority was glad at heart that the two unpopular Ministries at Tokyo and Peking were thus discredited by one stroke of diplomacy. After America had declared war it was believed that her future economic influence in East Asia would become even greater than that of Britain. Therefore efforts were made to persuade the Washington Government to recognize Japan's paramountcy in China, but the declamation of a militarist Cabinet's readiness even to fight for the integrity of a Republic sounded only a discordant note, because, excepting Germany, whom the whole world was determined to democratize, there was no Power that would endanger the political entity of China. The proposal to develop the industrial resources of China as a joint undertaking of American and Japanese capitalists would seem feasible, if it were to bring about a general, human and material mobilization to bring the world struggle to a successful termination. China is progressing, though slowly, toward a free constitutional government. If Japan is not democratized herself, she will be reduced to the position of a neutralized State surrounded by three great Republics—China, Russia and America, and by one commonwealth, Australia. The masses of her people are gradually awakening to the truth that the age of any form of Imperialism is past forever, and that they can have an influential voice in the council of nations only according to the measure of their share in an entire reconstruction of the world's policy on the principle of economic peace and interdependence.

As has been pointed out by eastern and western writers, China's adoption of the republican form of government was not only the natural outcome and logical conclusion of her historical evolution and psychology, but also a sort of protection in so far as China was riding on the all-sweep-

ing tide of human rights against territorial expansions. But the existence of economic imperialism in the world made the argument plausible that a nation could not enjoy equal rights with other nationalities without conserving its own resources. On this ground, it seems, the bureaucrats, militarists, party politicians and war-swollen industrial magnates of Japan excused themselves and each other in saying, it was impossible or unjustifiable to send out land forces to Europe, or to make more accommodations for America and Europe; or in trying though in vain to establish an independent industrial alliance on a Sino-Japanese understanding, and thus make the Far East a third group of nations outside the military and economic empires of the West. But the masses of the people not represented in the Lower House, excepting perhaps a section of wage-earners who shared something of the unprecedented prosperity of the industries connected with the War, gradually came to realize that their rights and interests were not consulted at all and that, if Japan after the War must continue to fight both military and economic rivals with her limited resources, they would have to pay still heavier taxes for the maintenance of a larger Army and Navy and buy home-made inferior goods at higher prices in the name of economic independence. More than this, they thought, there was no third course between aggressive militarism and international democracy for a party in the general conflict to pursue. To be in it and yet to try to become richer and stronger while comrade nations were staking everything for the common cause, was a veritable moral duplicity which would make any people an enemy of mankind as reprehensible as our present Teutonic foe. Yes, but, the militarist would say, the German menace could not be removed from the world; the people would retort,—why, then, did you not do more to crush the German menace which you could have done in more ways than one, even without despatching troops to Europe? The American declaration of war was indeed an eye-opener to those who had contended that every nation in the War had really been fighting for its own aims alone.

Did England so despair of her final victory over the Central Allies, the Japanese jingos began to ask, as to welcome American participation in the European war even by the surrender of her economic supremacy in the world? When the United States began to show genuine interest in revolutionary Russia, after Britain, France and Japan had failed to support the Czar's government and army against Germany and Austria, the chauvinistic elements in Japan anticipated and feared an American control of the Siberian railways and American exploitation of Asiatic Russian resources. But the thinking portion of the Japanese were well aware that the *post bellum* economic rivalry of the whole world would be centered in East Asia, anyhow; that Japan alone could not develop China's vast resources and carry out all necessary reforms to modernize her economic institutions, even if the Tokyo Government was allowed to undertake these single-handed; that 1,000,000,000 *yen* of gold hoarded in the Japanese coffers were only pushing up prices higher and higher, while it would be a trifling sum in the world-wide struggle with which to recover at least 500 times as much, loaned and unproductively wasted by friends and foes for the war; and that therefore Japan should fight more vigorously and make greater sacrifices for other nations, as well as for herself, so that she could claim partnership in the joint stock corporation of peaceful nations, instead of becoming a hopeless competitor with small funds and big rivals. As the ultimate justification of German preparedness and belligerency would be on economic grounds, the crushing of the Kaiser's autocracy and Prussian militarism must be followed by the readjustment of international relations along the line of the commercial open-door throughout the world.

From such a point of view as this, the refusal by the United States Government to support Japan in her intervention in Siberia is correctly interpreted and rather welcomed by those Japanese who are opposed to their militaristic-bureaucratic cabinet, because, though America would never interfere in the internal politics of any friendly nation, the present government of Japan is more likely to be mis-

understood by Russian revolutionaries as a friend of absolutism rather than of republicanism. Nevertheless, it is true, England, France and Italy would welcome a speedy and efficient Japanese expedition into Siberia and its coöperation there with Chinese contingents, with a view of deterring the enemy from concentrating his eastern forces for a spring drive at the western front. Such an effect it would have, we admit; but we cannot expect that half a million Japanese and Chinese in Asiatic Russia would materially hasten a final check of the steadily spreading influence of the Germans. Japan should cultivate a complete understanding of her aims and obtain the hearty coöperation of China, America and the healthy elements in Russia, as well as of other Powers interested in both European and Asiatic Russia, before launching on an enterprise that might last for years and cost huge amounts of money and many lives. These necessary steps could not be entrusted to a Government which does not have the real sympathy of any friendly Power, say the party politicians; no combination of parties, say the unrepresented masses, who have directly or indirectly subscribed to the nationally selfish policies of the last and present Ministries deserves popular support at home, much less the coöperation of the friendly Powers, unless they publicly own the sins they have committed. This is no other than the voice of democracy. The people in general, ever since the close of the Sino-Japanese War, have too long been subjected to national disgrace or economic pinch after successful warfare to allow a Cabinet to prolong its precarious existence by another expensive war, or to permit the parties to form a coalition Government for eventually exploiting the true interest of the masses in the name of national self-defence. The general object of the War is to make the world more livable for mankind, and therefore it does not justify a class or two within a nation imposing upon the rest of the community the duties of shedding blood and suffering privations, without their free consent. All these ideas have been taught us by what has happened in China, Russia and western Europe, more especially by which is being said and done by America. But once the new

world, with its idealism and power, tries to monopolize the control of Russian railways or Siberian resources or to impose upon the old world peace terms which do not apply to its existing conditions, the American influence for the good of humanity will be largely diminished.

We are not oblivious of the fact, moreover, that a multitude of conflicting counsels in the ranks of the anti-German Powers has always crippled their cause more or less and made their diplomacy and warfare behind-handed and passive. The nature of the case necessitates this. From an academic view-point it is a cause rather of congratulation than of regret, because half a dozen nations with diverse ideals and interest can not be free and independent and yet fight like one man for a common cause. But the practical exigencies of the war urgently demand that, within the limit of not sacrificing principles for expediencies, all comrade belligerents sink their differences arising out of prejudice or ignorance; so vast is the field and so big the stake that no single people with the noblest aspirations on earth can hope to rightly grasp the whole situation. We honestly fear that neither American reinforcements to the European front nor a Sino-Japanese intervention in Asiatic Russia would alone frighten the enemy effectively. America from her geographical position and economic strength can and must coöperate at both fronts, if not in the south as well. American participation in the Siberian expedition would materially help to solve the problem of forestalling Russian misunderstanding, of mobilizing East Asian resources for all parties on our side including Russia, and of inducing Japan to put more of her merchant marine at the disposal of her comrades. The present writer, for one, sincerely hopes that, when the Cabinet at Tokyo is reorganized on a non-military basis, the fear now entertained in America that German agents will misrepresent Japanese aims to the Bolshevik Russia will entirely disappear. The French suggestion that America should guard the littoral provinces, China should watch the frontiers, and Japan should march to a point near Baikal where the Siberian railway line branches off to the northeast, seems the best programme sketched out so far.

As the complete understanding between America and Japan is an absolutely necessary condition for the general conduct of the war, so is it for the consolidation of the Chinese Republic for the people of China. The Japanese Government, till quite recently, followed a policy of supporting the existing Power that was established at Peking as the nucleus of national unity, but it proved an utter failure as the Republican Opposition offered a stout resistance to the military leaders. The Governor-General at Mukden illegally seized the Japanese arms and ammunition sold to the Chinese Government, and now defends his action on the ground of using them for national defense against the penetration of German influence, though in reality he marched his troops toward the capital city to force the Republican President either to suppress the constitutional movement or else to resign. The American position, on the other hand, of not allowing any one Power to have political paramountcy in China is of course theoretically right and practically saner. But the much-desired consolidation of the young Republic would never materialize, if the conflicting elements in it could always find foreign backing for their several interests and claims. A joint control by two or more Powers, like the one once established in Egypt, may end in the practical partition of China into separate spheres of interest, for the country is so extensive and the interested Powers' claims in it are so diverse that the Chinese can not realize any benefit accruing from national unification. If therefore the Powers agreed upon the advantages to themselves and to the Chinese of a united, stronger and richer China, they must also come to agree that Japan, America and Europe have all spoiled China, from laudable motives or otherwise, by lending her money by which official pockets were enriched or local improvements made, more than the standard of living of the masses or the national status of the 400,000,000 souls was raised. The Chinese are too civilized, in a way, to think of national security at the expense of personal freedom. They look upon officialdom or militarism as something like the rat that lives on the leavings of man. They will therefore see any advantage in forming a compact body

politic, only when convinced that no outside people will advance funds to a government which sells national rights and interests for its private ends.

While the Chinese must awake to their national and international importance in the world of economics, the Japanese are revising their views on government, diplomacy and patriotism through the necessity of fraternizing with the democratic, republican or richer members of the family of nations. The idea of the Far East for the Japanese and Chinese, of the political and economic independence of the two Asian Neighbors from the aggressive and peaceful West alike, is no more than part and parcel of Germanism to which Japan has been trained for the last three decades or more, since the popular agitation for a liberal government after the French, English and American models had been drastically suppressed. The late Emperor proclaimed on his resumption of political power in 1868, "Knowledge shall be sought in the wide world and all State affairs shall be decided by public opinion;" and since the Russo-Japanese War, by which the international position of Japan was made secure, certainly there has been no excuse whatsoever for maintaining bureaucracy and militarism as a means to patriotism or national defense. Unless the Germanism side of Japan is demolished by a league of free nations, the Germanism within Japan will go on eating up the blood and soul of the entire nation. If the Central Allies are not sufficiently chastized, the Japanese or Teutonic education or inclination will say triumphantly: There, you see! no country has been fighting for human rights; Japan after all must be prepared with China against the territorial aggression and economic invasion of Europe and America. The salvation of the millions and millions of the Far Eastern people turns upon the pivot of coöperation and interdependence of the East and the West for a speedy and complete removal of the only obstacle in the way of universal concord and mutual uplift of mankind.